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MAY MEETING, 1874.

A stated monthly meeting was held on Thursday, May 14th, at eleven o'clock A.M.; Vice-President Adams in the chair.

The Recording Secretary read his record of the two preceding meetings.

The Librarian read his monthly list of donors to the Library for the past month.

The Cabinet-keeper reported gifts from Mr. W. P. Lunt: of a printed broadside, being President Washington's "Message on the Treaty Papers," dated March 30, 1796; also an engraved copy of Stuart's portrait of Washington, by W. L. Ormsby.

The Council reported a request that the Society should decide by vote whether the stated monthly meetings of the Society should be dispensed with during the summer months. Whereupon it was

Voted, To dispense with the meetings of the Society for the months of July and August, unless for any special reason they should be summoned by order of the acting President.

The Recording Secretary offered the following vote, which was unanimously adopted: —

Whereas the President of this Society, the Honorable Robert C. Winthrop, has recently sailed for Europe, intending to be absent some months, therefore *Resolved*, That Mr. Winthrop be authorized and requested to represent the Society on any fitting occasion that may occur during his absence abroad, and that he be empowered to negotiate for the Society any exchange of publications with foreign societies, and to act for its interest in any way that he shall find expedient during his absence.

The Honorable William Gray was elected a Resident Member.

Dr. PAIGE read and presented the following letter from the Reverend Samuel Danforth to his brother Thomas Danforth, dated March 30, 1670: —

Addressed: —
For the Honoured Mr. Tho. Danforth at Cambridge these.

HONOURED & DEAR BROTHER, — I received your loving return to my message yesterday by Sam: Indian and rested better satisfied in your candid answer then if you had sent mee what I desired; but your superabundant care & respect this morning occasions no small exercise to my spirit. For not to receive the kindnes of a friend may be interpreted an vnkindnes: and yet to receive such a kindnes as

will be ten times more damage to y^e^ donour, then advantage to y^e^ receiver, would argue little prudence. At present I have little need or vse of a horse, I may well go on foot or borrow of my neighbors, as oft as I have heart or leysure to go abroad, and indeed I should not have sent to you vntill y^e^ hot weather had come in, had I not thought I should have gratified you thereby, by taking off a little part of your great burden in providing for your Cattell in so scarce a time. And indeed both Deacon Park & some others have offered to lend mee a horse all summer for my vse, I providing pasture. Onely I was willing rather to be holding to yourself then to them. I know it is a busy time of y^e^ year & you have more need of a beast at hand for service (in regard of your Care of y^e^ Colledge) then ten other men. These & such like considerations force mee, contrary to y^e^ ordinary rules of friendship, to offer violence to my self in sending back your mare, and to entreat your excuse & pardon in that behalfe. The truth is, matters are so circumstanced that a man can hardly come into any company & enter into any discourse, but before he is aware he finds himself in y^e^ like fan and sieve, as that wherein Satan winnowed Peter in y^e^ high priest Hall. In so much that many times I am glad of any fair excuse for my abode at home. Dear brother, interpret all things well from him that meaneth well, my wife cōmands her love & service to yourself & my dear sister with many thanks for former and late kindnesses & ptic^ll^ her loving token yesterday. Forget vs not in your dayly prayers. S^r^ I remain

Your affectionate Bro.

S. DANFORTH.

This 31, 1^m^ (70).

Mr. SIBLEY read an interesting letter from Governor Pownall, a copy of which will soon be furnished for the Proceedings.

Dr. GREEN read the following letter from Thomas H. Benton to Amos Kendall: —

ST. LOUIS, August 24, 1828.

DEAR SIR, — Recurring to the fact which late developments brought to my knowledge, that you were willing to have left Kentucky a few years ago for an adequate support at Washington, it has occurred to me to propose to you, *if nothing better presents itself*, that you should turn your thoughts to this place. It is a town of 7,000 or 8,000 souls, rapidly increasing in wealth and population, as the building of an hundred houses this summer will testify, and destined to take rank second to New Orleans in the valley of the Mississippi. There is but one press here, and that, a mere mud-machine, belongs to the other side, and is despised even by them; yet the owners of it live in fine brick houses, built upon their labors. You may ask, Why have others failed? I answer, Upon the same principle that a sieve cannot hold water. The inducements to come here would be, *first*, to make money, which I am sure that an imperial sheet, twice a week for the town, once a week for the country, conducted as you could, it would infallibly do;

secondly, to maintain the ascendency of the political principles which you espouse, and which are all triumphant in this State and Illinois. I have no hesitation in saying that St. Louis presents the best point, in my opinion, for a talented editor that is to be found in the United States. But it is not necessary to pursue the subject further, before it is known whether *nothing better* (and I am sure that all our political friends would agree that you deserve better) presents itself, and whether you would consent to leave Kentucky. I think I could say you would have *a clear stage here:* three-fourths of the population would receive you joyfully, and the remainder would chiefly join in. I can vouch, with a knowledge of what I say, that the mass of the administration party in this town would support your press. Please to write to me.

Yours truly,

THOMAS H. BENTON.

Mr. ADAMS reported upon a number of letters of John Adams to Professor John Winthrop of Harvard College, written from Philadelphia in 1775 and 1776, which had been referred to him at a preceding meeting. The letters, he ascertained, had, with one exception, never been printed. He read portions of them to the meeting. On the back of the letters Professor Winthrop had preserved copies of his own replies. The originals of these, Mr. Adams said, were among the papers of John Adams, and could be used to supply some defects in the copies. The whole correspondence he regarded as valuable; and the letters were referred to the committee on a volume of "Revolutionary Papers," of which Mr. Adams is chairman.

The Recording Secretary, Mr. DEANE, called attention to a printed paper, received some weeks since, addressed to "The Board of Regents of the Massachusetts Historical Society," postmarked "Middelburg, 29 Jan. '74." It was in the Dutch language, and proved to be a communication to the Zealand Academy of Arts and Sciences at Middelburg, in December last, by its Librarian. The following translation of the paper was read by the Secretary: *—

> *Two interesting copies of "The Holy Bible, ... translated into the Indian Language [by John Eliot]. . . . . Cambridge (Old Testament,* 1663; *New Testament,* 1661)." †

* This translation has been made for me by Mr. George Dexter, of Cambridge. — C. D.

† See p. 269 of the catalogue of the library of the Zealand Academy, where we find: —

No. 1986. The Old Testament, with Psalms, in the American Indian language. 4to, full mor. gilt.

No. 1987. The Holy Bible, transl. in the Indian language, — Mamusse wun neetupanatamwe up Biblum God naseeswe Nukkone Testament kah wonk wusku Testament. John Eliot. Cambridge, S. Green and M. Johnson. 1663. 4to.

Communicated to the Literary Section of the Zealand Academy of Sciences at Middelburg.

The Librarian, Herr Nagtglas, called attention to two copies of a very remarkable book in our Library, — a translation of the Bible into the language of the American Indians, by John Eliot, called by his contemporaries the Apostle of America (Indorum Americanorum Apostolus). He communicated various particulars about the reasons for this translation and the emigration of the English Puritans for freedom of worship. He recalled the fact that the so-called Brownists, or Independents, had already, in 1588, left England for the Netherlands, and founded congregations in Middelburg, Amsterdam, and Leyden; that, in 1633, they had in the ship "Mayflower," of Plymouth, removed to New England, and there made strenuous efforts to convert the natives to Christianity. Among the first and most zealous of their preachers was John Eliot. His missionary work was not without fruit: in a single year many thousand redskins called themselves Christians, some were even ordained teachers, and several schools and a church organization were established. The first translation of the Bible into the Indian tongue was published in 1663, and 1,500 copies were printed at Cambridge, near Boston. Most of these seem to have been destroyed in a contest (1674) between Indian tribes. A second edition of 2,000 copies of the New Testament appeared in 1680, and in 1685 one of 2,000 copies of the Old Testament.

These publications created no small excitement in Europe, especially as connected with the great noise about the progress of Christianity among the heathen. People talked of fifty thousand converts; and about the same time, in 1687, there appeared a Latin letter from Crescentius Matherus, V.D.M., of Boston, in New England, to Professor J. van Leusden, of Utrecht, of which Professor Grævius gives an account.*

The first edition of this translation of the Bible has become exceedingly rare. In a work lately published at New York, an opportunity to examine which was afforded the Librarian by the kindness of Messrs. F. A. G. Campbell and Nijhoff of the Hague, it is stated that a copy of this edition was sold not long ago for 1050 dollars, or 250 pounds sterling.†

The two copies of this first edition in our Library are peculiarly interesting. The first, the Old Testament, seems to have been long considered valuable, as it has been elegantly bound in red morocco, with green silk on the inner covers, and tooled with gilt edges. The titlepage is wanting. In its place we find the following manuscript note: —

* This letter, of July 12, 1687, — "translated out of *Latin* into *English*," — was published in Cotton Mather's "Life and Death of the Reverend Mr. John Eliot." 3d ed., London, 1694. pp. 94–99. — C. D.

† An Essay towards an Indian bibliography, being a catalogue of books relating to the history, antiquities, languages, customs, religion, wars, literature, and origin of the American Indians, in the library of Thomas W. Field. With bibliographical and historical notes and synopses of the contents of some of the works least known. New York: Scribner, Armstrong, & Co. 1873. pp. iv. 430, roy. 8vo.

"All the Bibles of the Christian Indians were burned or destroyed by the heathen savages. This one alone was saved; and from it a new edition, with improvement, and an entirely new translation of the New Testament, was undertaken. I saw at Roesberri (Roccsbury?), about an hour's ride from Boston, this Old Testament printed, and some sheets of the New. The printing-office was at Cambridge, three hours' ride from Boston, where also there was, close to the borders of the savages, a college of students of another nation. The Psalms of David are added in the same metre.

"At Roesberri dwelt Mr. Hailot" (N. B. — The Zealand sound of Eliot), "a very godly preacher there. He was at this time about seventy years old, and his son was a preacher at Boston. This good old man was one of the first Independent preachers to settle in these parts, seeking freedom to worship. He was the principal translator and director of the printing of both the first and second editions of this Indian Bible. Out of special zeal and love he gave me this copy of the first edition, for which I am, and shall continue, grateful. This was in June, 1680.*

"JASPER DANCKAERTS."

In April, 1757, this Bible was marked as "extra rare" in the catalogue of the library of Mr. H. J. Bosschaert, of Middelburg. It was bought by the bookseller Gillissen on the 26th April, 1757, for £6 3*s.* 18*d.* (f. 23.40), and came into the possession of Professor Willemsen, and appears in the catalogue of his library, sold at Middelburg in April, 1781.† It was not offered at the sale, but was withdrawn, and came into the hands of Professor de Fremerij, who, in February, 1807, presented it to the Zealand Academy of Sciences. It was then remarked as something curious that the letter *r* does not once occur in the whole book.

The other copy, in specially good condition, bound in stiff leather with red edges, contains the Old Testament of 1663 and the New Testament of 1661, with the double title and the dedication to Charles II., which, according to Mr. Thomas W. Field, is found in very few copies.

In conclusion, the Librarian spoke of Jasper Danckaerts. He was probably the person mentioned by De la Rue in his "Geletterd Zeeland," and in his private annotations. He was a cooper (kuiper‡) in the service of the East India Company at Middelburg, and wrote some books, which were, however, never published, but for which he, among others, was praised by Professor Campegius Vitringa, in a letter written in 1699. In a manuscript considered valuable by De la Rue, — "Triumph of the Holy Hebrew Bible over time, and the chronology

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* The spelling of this note has been modernized.

† The book is thus described in this catalogue: "The American Indian Bible, containing the whole Old Testament, and the Psalms in the same order as in English metre. . . . Wants the title and some few leaves of the Psalm Book."

‡ In a journal of Danckaerts, alluded to further on, he speaks of himself as a "wine-racker"; that is, one who put up wine in casks. — C. D.

of the world and the birth of the church, each in six periods, with a seventh added for rest," — Danckaerts calls himself a lover of mathematics. Upon this see "H. Sinnebeelden, History en Godsgeleerdheid tot Middelburgh in Zeelandt."

DECEMBER, 1873.

Mr. DEANE proceeded to say that some information concerning Jasper Danckaerts, or, as the name was sometimes spelled, Dankers, additional to that given in the above communication, might be found in the first volume of the "Memoirs of the Long Island Historical Society," published in 1867, which contained Dankers's "Journal of a Voyage to New York in 1679–80." Dankers belonged to a sect of Christians, known as Labadists, so called after its founder, Jean de Labadie, born near Bordeaux in 1610. He came here in company with a fellow missionary, named Sluyter, in search of a suitable place to found a colony for persons of that faith. In June, 1680, he came from New York to Boston, to re-embark for home, arriving here on the 23d of that month. In the following extracts from his journal he gives his impressions of Boston, its inhabitants, and also describes his visit to Eliot at Roxbury: —

Dankers's Journal.

[July] 7*th, Sunday.* We heard preaching in three churches, by persons who seemed to possess zeal, but no just knowledge of Christianity. The auditors were very worldly and inattentive. The best of the ministers whom we have yet heard is a very old man, named John Eliot, who has charge of the instruction of the Indians in the Christian religion. He has translated the Bible into their language. We had already made inquiries of the booksellers for a copy of it, but it was not to be obtained in Boston. They told us if one was to be had, it would be from Mr. Eliot. We determined to go on Monday to the village where he resided, and was the minister, called Roxbury. Our landlord had promised to take us, but was not able to do so, in consequence of his having too much business. We therefore thought we could go alone and do what we wanted.

8*th, Monday.* We went accordingly, about eight o'clock in the morning, to Roxbury, which is three quarters of an hour from the city, in order that we might get home early, inasmuch as our captain had informed us he would come in the afternoon for our money, and in order that Mr. Eliot might not be gone from home. On arriving at his house, he was not there; and we, therefore, went to look around the village, and the vicinity. We found it justly called *Rocksbury*, for it was very rocky, and had hills entirely of rocks. Returning to his house, we spoke to him, and he received us politely. Although he could speak neither Dutch nor French, and we spoke but little English, and were unable to express ourselves in it always, we managed, by means of

Latin and English, to understand each other. He was seventy-seven years old, and had been forty-eight years in these parts. He had learned very well the language of the Indians who lived about there. We asked him for an Indian Bible. He said in the late Indian war all the Bibles and Testaments were carried away, and burnt or destroyed, so that he had not been able to save any for himself; but a new edition was in press, which he hoped would be much better than the first one, though that was not to be despised. We inquired whether any part of the old or new edition could be obtained by purchase, and whether there was any grammar of that language in English. Thereupon he went and brought us the Old Testament, and also the New Testament, made up with some sheets of the new edition, so that we had the Old and New Testaments complete. He also brought us two or three small specimens of the grammar. We asked him what we should pay him for them, but he desired nothing. We presented him our *Declaration* in Latin, and informed him about the persons and conditions of the church, whose declaration it was, and about Madam Schurman and others, with which he was delighted, and could not restrain himself from praising God the Lord that had raised up men and reformers, and begun the reformation in Holland. He deplored the decline of the church in New England, and especially in Boston, so that he did not know what would be the final result. We inquired how it stood with the Indians, and whether any good fruit had followed his work. Yes, much, he said, if we meant true conversion of the heart; for they had in various countries instances of conversion, as they called it, and had seen it amounted to nothing at all; that they must not endeavor, like Scribes and Pharisees, to make Jewish proselytes, but true Christians. He could thank God, he continued, and God be praised for it, there were Indians, whom he knew, who were truly converted of heart to God, and whose profession was sincere. It seemed as if he were disposed to know us further; and we therefore said to him, if he had any desire to write to our people, he could use the names which stood on the title-page of the Declaration, and that we hoped to come and converse with him again. He accompanied us as far as the jurisdiction of Roxbury extended, where we parted from him. (pp. 382–384.)

In 1683 Dankers and Sluyter returned to this country in prosecution of their colonization scheme, and founded a settlement on a tract of land called "Bohemia Manor," situated principally in Maryland. The colony came to an end before 1730.

A few errors in chronology, in Herr Nagtglas's interesting communication, were thought to be too obvious to the student of English or of American history to need special correction.